



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION IX

75 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

June 27, 2014

Walter Lamb  
Ballona Wetlands Land Trust  
2811 Pico Blvd  
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Dear Mr. Lamb:

I am responding to a recent email you sent to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator McCarthy and others concerning the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program (NEP).

EPA is currently conducting an evaluation of the Santa Monica NEP. NEP evaluations are conducted every five years to determine whether adequate progress is being made implementing the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans (CCMPs) to merit continued funding under Section 320 of the Clean Water Act. The evaluations include a site visit, which, for Santa Monica Bay, was conducted on June 10 – 11, 2014. This site visit included program briefings by Santa Monica Bay Restoration Program staff and field visits to several project sites, specific sites, including the Ballona Wetlands, which was the subject of your email.

Restoration of the Ballona Wetlands is an important component of the Santa Monica Bay NEP's CCMP (also known as the Bay Restoration Plan). EPA's Section 320 funds support the NEP's scientific and technical input to the project, such as current and historical ecological data, not choices about future plans for the site. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife owns the land and is responsible for final project decisions. Before any restoration activities can begin, CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) and NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) requirements must be completed and permits must be obtained from various public entities including the Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the California Coastal Commission. The CEQA/NEPA work and the permitting process are underway and I encourage you to participate in those processes which provide for public comment opportunities regarding the project decisions that may be of concern to you.

If you have any further questions on this matter, please contact Sam Ziegler, Chief of our Watersheds Section at (415) 972-3399.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jane Diamond", is positioned above the printed name.

Jane Diamond  
Director  
Water Division

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